

January 13, 2020

The regular meeting of the Town Board of Vernon was held at the Town Office Building on the above date with the following persons present: Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Steve Adamkowski, John Peters and Myron Thurston, Council members. Also present: County Legislator Keith Schiebel and 2 citizens.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silence. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Watson at 7:00 p.m.

Supervisor Watson asked the council members if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the December 23, 2019 meeting. There being none, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Abstained 1 (Thurston). Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Mary LaClair questioned why it is taking the Town Board so long to set new ordinances for venues following the Woodstock application last summer. She is concerned about the crowd size, types of concerts and language that these concerts can bring to the Town of Vernon. She wants the board to set boundaries as this is a family community. Watson advised that they are going to review some suggestions from codes and discuss them tonight. LaClair said she had no trust in Bennati and Thurston as they were on the Town Board in previous years concerts held in Vernon that did not go well. Bennati told her that what she believes is unacceptable at these venues is not what others feel is unacceptable as LaClair was concerned about the track record of foul rock concerts. Thurston stated over the years there were some concerts that did not go well but that each time they made changes to the following concerts which led to a very successful Springsteen concert. He also wants to work with these venues as they do help our community. The town receives good money from the VLT (Video Lottery Terminals), Thurston said. LaClair believes it is all about the money. Bennati questioned LaClair about charging for parking on her property during the past concerts if she was not in favor of them.

Mary LaClair also requests the Town of Vernon go on record to refuse sanctuary for illegal aliens, alias refugees.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, Education and Libraries: Bennati reported that he was asked by a member of the Sherrill Library Board for an increase in money to be given to the Library. He advised them that in the agreement made with the City of Sherrill we pay them one lump sum of money and Sherrill disburses it as they want. He will need to contact the City with this request. Supervisors and Intergovernmental Relations: Adamkowski requested articles for the Town Newsletter by early February. SWOCO: coming close to the 30 year anniversary. Over time the cost to maintain has and will continue to become less. Highway Superintendent: Freemire said the weather has been favorable lately. There was an incident with a snow plow digging into the blacktop on Fancett Rd. where there was a culvert pipe they changed getting it ready for blacktop. Waiting on insurance company: County Legislator Schiebel submitted a written report including 1) Oneida County extended the 2 percent Hotel Occupancy Tax 2) Two pieces of legislation Schiebel thinks we will be dealing with as a town and as a county is the legalization of Marijuana and the bail reform that has just been put into effect.

There were no reports from the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Assessors, Economic Development, Operations, and Historian.

A motion to accept above reports was made by Thurston, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pay bills was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters to authorize Supervisor to pay all utilities, bank indebtedness and invest funds wisely without prior approval of the Board. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to appoint Rome Sentinel as the official newspaper for the Town of Vernon was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to designate Community Bank to be used as depository for all Town funds was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to allow Supervisor or Deputy Supervisor to attend SWOCO meetings as Town representative was made by Thurston, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to authorize the Highway Superintendent to purchase tools, equipment and implements in an amount not to exceed \$2,000 per purchase in 2020 without prior approval of the Town Board was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Thurston, seconded by Bennati to set the salary for members of the Planning Board and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals at \$110 per meeting attended with Board Chairman of each board to receive \$225 per meeting chaired; members' pay not to exceed \$900 each annually and Chairman of each not to exceed \$2,400 annually, secretary of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to receive \$110 per meeting; pay for members of the Board of Assessment Review will be set at \$175 per day with Chairman receiving \$225. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati to accept the following Highway rates of pay for 2020:
Working Foreman, \$23.75/hr; Heavy Equipment Operator (2), \$23.40/hr; Motor Equipment Operator (3), \$23.10/hr; Mechanic (1) \$23.10/hr; Laborer, minimum wage to \$16.20/hr; Part time laborer, minimum wage to \$16.00/hr. One (1) week vacation after completion of one (1) year's work, two (2) week vacation after completion of two (2) years' work, three (3) week vacation after completion of five (5) years' work, four (4) week vacation after completion of fifteen (15) years' work. Six (6) personal days – non-cumulative. All vacation/personal days to be paid at standard pay rate. Holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday (1/2 day), Memorial Day, week of July 5 (vacation), Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day plus following Friday and Christmas. Health Insurance: 50% during first six months of work. Town pays other 50% if employee signs during first year of employment. Second six months and thereafter the employee will pay 15% of the premium per month. The Town will pay \$20 per month toward dental and vision insurance. The Town will pay one-half of single-person health insurance for retiree with 30 years of service. Noncontributory retirement and disability for Tiers 1 and 2; employees pay 3% for Tiers 3 and 4. Tier 5 and 6 employees pay 3% for entire career. Five days sick leave (per year) accumulative to sixty (60) days. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters to accept the following appointments:

Deputy Supervisor – Gene Bennati
Historian - Janice Buneo
Deputy Town Clerk – Julie McElroy
Deputy Town Clerk - Beverley Mackey
Bookkeeper to the Supervisor - Wendy Coston
Bookkeeper to the Highway Superintendent - Wendy Coston

Historian - Janice Buneo - \$750.00/yr
Town Engineer - Delta Engineering - \$700/yr
Dog Control Officer – Clayton Conover - per schedule
Filey Road Plowing - Kevin Mumford - \$395/yr
General Office Help (part time depending
on experience) – minimum wage to \$16.00/hr

Election Workers - to be paid by Oneida County Board of Elections

Potash Hill Cemetery Custodian - Elizabeth Eastman - \$650/yr

Marble Hill Rd. Indian Cemetery Custodian - Melvin Phillips - \$750/yr

There was discussion on withholding 10% of pay for Town Councilman Myron Thurston. This has been policy for newly elected officials in the past however he previously worked for the Town of Vernon; Board Members would like to speak with the Town Attorney to see if he needs to be considered a new employee. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to audit Town books on February 10, 2020 at 6:30p.m. was made by Thurston, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to transfer \$24,500 from DB5130.3 Highway Equipment to DB5111.4 Resurface was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. Art Freemire advised this was for Ottman Rd, Fancett Rd and Bleeker Rd. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to agree to spend Highway funds \$364,300 was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pay part time employees on Holidays if they are regularly scheduled days that they work was made by Bennati, seconded by Thurston. No Discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

An email was received with a draft letter from Congressman Anthony Brindisi to Commissioner Marie Therese Dominquez of NYS Department of Transportation regarding Vernon Center water issue.

Registration is open for the 31st Annual Local Government Conference, Thursday, March 26, 2020 in Watertown. Wendy needs to know how many Board members will attend. Watson, Thurston and Bennati are interested in going.

A letter was received from NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation refusing our application to NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement Act due to the application being incomplete. Thurston advised that this was something that you have to apply for each year to keep you in the revolving door. Now that Oneida Castle is moving forward on the Sewer project and will start digging in the spring it would be worth revisiting extending the sewer issues in Sconodda to Pratt Dr.

Upstate Mobile Mammography had an excellent turn out here on January 9, 2020 and is requesting to have an additional day on July 21, 2020 from 10:00am – 2:00pm. A motion to approve this request was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Thurston. No Discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

The Codes Department submitted recommendations for changes for administrative and temporary use permits. Board members would like to set up a meeting that includes Codes, Planning Board, Utica Rome Speedway and Vernon Downs to work out the details of what can work for everyone.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Bennati apologized for the disagreement during public concerns as he goes back 40 years with Mary LaClair.

Thurston said one thing that came from Mary LaClair that is the truth is we did have issues with the first few concerts at Vernon Downs. But after each concert we sat down with Vernon Downs Management, Codes and the Town Board and we put in more restrictions and more restrictions and more restrictions to the point that each one got

better and when Bruce Springsteen and Willy Nelson came here those concerts went wonderfully.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. was made by Bennati, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Additions to minutes on file
in Town Clerk's Office.

Jennifer Champney
Town Clerk

This meeting was digitally recorded and is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None